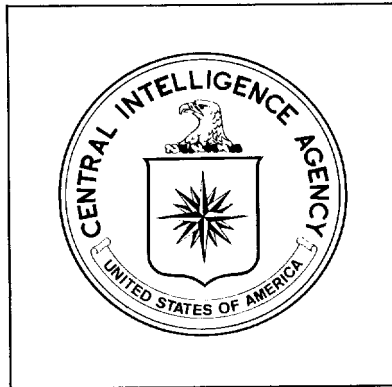


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SC NO. 08350/75
August 18, 1975

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MIDDLE EAST – AFRICA – SOUTH ASIA

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Somalia - Arab States

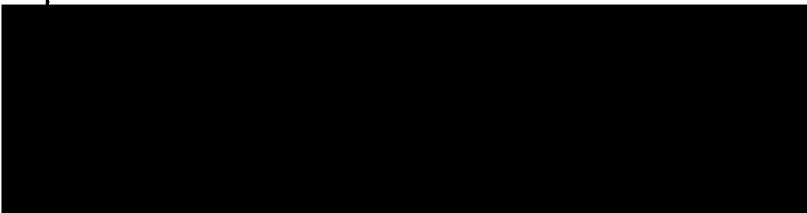
The Honeymoon is Over

Somalia's relations with the Arab world, which had been growing closer last year, are likely to become increasingly cool.

The steady deterioration in relations is due in part to Somalia's bitterness over the postponement of the Arab summit conference, which was to have been held in Mogadiscio last June. President Siad, who has gone to great lengths to portray the Hamitic Somalis as Arab, felt deeply humiliated when the scheduled meeting did not materialize. In a cable sent to all Arab heads of state, Siad complained that the postponement was an illegal attempt by certain Arab states to change the venue of the meeting.

Siad is also dissatisfied with what he considers to be Arab attempts to meddle in internal Somali affairs. Saudi Arabia, for example, has made its promises of financial assistance to the economically hard-pressed Somalis contingent on a loosening of Somalia's ties with the Soviet Union and a modification of its socialist domestic policies. Only a Libyan payment of \$10 million appears to have been made of the \$103 million promised to the Somalis for drought relief at the 1974 Arab summit in Rabat.

Arab diplomats in Mogadiscio see the Soviets behind the change in Somalian attitude. They believe that Soviet advisers in various levels of the Somali government are influencing the Somalis to criticize Cairo's peace-seeking activities toward Israel and to root out what influence Egypt still exerts in the country. (CONFIDENTIAL)



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